

## NATIONAL LEAGUE IS LEADER IN REVELRY

WILL Celebrate Its Fortieth Anniversary With Banquet Wednesday Night.

## JOHNSON CAN'T ATTEND

New York may just as well prepare to settle back for a week of revelry. The magnates of the National League come Tuesday to begin their annual schedule meeting, and before they get through they intend to paint the name of the parent major in letters of fire along the Great White Way. The National League is forty years old, if you please, and will celebrate the event fittingly with a banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria Wednesday evening, 6:30 sharp. R. S. V. P.

This will be a great week for Peacock Alley and environs, but not as gay, perhaps, as it might have been had not an unexpected cloud gathered on the horizon of the newly established baseball peace. This cloud will rob the town of the presence of Ben Johnson, leader of the American League, and he will be unable to attend the meeting intended to assemble his colleagues, too, for schedule and legislative discussions. But he has postponed the American League meeting until February 17.

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Johnson cancelled his invitation to the National League celebration in order to be on the ground in the appearance of the new. He also has no worries in his mind—the disposition of two Cleveland ball clubs in the American League and the American Association respectively controlled by Charles Somers. The banking committee which controls his financial affairs insists that Somers remain in the game.

Johnson and his followers in annual meetings assembled are always good for at least one speech head. But under existing conditions it may well be that they save the news a fortnight. The International League is going to cut in with a speech the International League happens to be the most important in the country.

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It is the International League that Barrow and his associates hold the key to an easy solution of the only vexing problem that confronts permanent baseball peace. Should Baltimore win its point before Judge Kline, the National Commission nobles will return to present the case to the Barrow circuit that the Baltimore malcontents some interests in the International League franchise of that city.

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As far as I am concerned, when we have approached already by both major leagues, there is little to occupy the attention of the National League in a business sense. Harry F. Sinclair is expected to be on the ground to peddle the "slave" that he has in store.

A pre-spring meeting devoted more time of consequence than other conferences. Therefore it is not without the bound of possibility that a few swans of importance might be consummated. It is known unqualifiedly that all of the teams have asked multitudes of waivers, which may result in wholesale switching of players.

There appears little likelihood of an amendment to the National League roster limit of twenty-five players from June 1 to September, each season. The club owners are of the opinion that such a low limit was directly responsible for the exceptionally close race of 1915.

Charles H. Ebbets, the Brooklyn impresario, will attempt once more to establish radical changes in the methods of selecting players.

This is no new idea. Ebbets has tried unsuccessfully several times before to gain the concurrence of the other fifteen major league club presidents.

This scheme of Ebbets is well worthy of a thorough trial. He proposes that while the members of the club are eligible to draft by major clubs, he can be determined upon the needs of the major leagues should draw lots. To the league of the winners would fall the privilege of making a first selection. Selections would alternate until all the drafts were made, and then another. Each club would give the first place of choice of each circuit first choice for its league, and so on up to the champion, which would have eight picks. So soon as any club's selections swelled its reserve list of players to thirty-five, that club would drop automatically from the bidding process.

Under this system of drafting, it would result in the greatest good to the game, said Ebbets yesterday.

"Minor league clubs object to the present system of drafting. At present the major clubs have the right to name an unlimited number of players in their drafting lists. This is where the dissatisfaction among minor league clubs has arisen after being named."

"The plan would eliminate the technical evasion of the drafting rules now in effect. Furthermore, the greatest benefits would accrue to second division clubs. These are the ones that should be built up rather than their more fortunate fellows."

**Remained in Cuba to Work.**

When peace was restored in the unhappy island Capt. T. L. Huston began seriously to apply himself to the wonderful business opportunities the period of reconstruction presented. His experience in engineering and construction enabled him to head one of the first companies to lay the groundwork of a score of enterprises which rapidly, calculation and untiring effort developed into a rapidly accumulated fortune. Within ten years the name of Huston in Havana was synonymous with the symbol of business stability.

"I spent fifteen arduous though not uneventful or unpleasant years in Cuba," said the captain. "I had to hustle. I can tell you, to hold my own with the shrewd competition that flooded in after the war, but the best of my players were recruited from the Yankees papers to which I subscribed. You see I hadn't forgotten my boyhood idol, the Reds. Baseball was born in snow and bone. Neither tropic heat nor tropic rain could drive thoughts of the old game from my head."

Cuba took to baseball after the war. The natives went to it like wildfire after the soldiers had popularized it. They developed some really high class talent. This was a fine substitute for the real article. I can tell you. But still I enjoyed the recruiting bats of Harry Wagner, James Lajoie, Sam Rice, and national hero sluggers of the type.

"My interest in the major leagues was fanned by the fact that while I was isolated from my friends at home many of them engaged in the promotion of organized baseball. August Hermann, Dan Johnson, John E. Bruce, Charles P.

## CAPT. HUSTON A VICTIM OF HIS PASSION FOR BASEBALL

Fondness for Game, Not Desire for Profits, Led Him to Purchase Yankees.

## NEARLY BOUGHT CUBS

By W. J. MACBETH.

Capt. T. L. Huston, secretary-treasurer and half owner of the New York American Baseball Club, like the great summer game which he represents, is a law unto himself. Associated with the promotion of this sport for less than a year the captain has eclipsed in country-wide popularity men who have grown



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Taff and Charles Webb Murphy, tall but Mr. Taff's shorter members of the Free Sisters were but a few of many old time associates whose connection with the game further endeared it to me. As soon as my business affairs permitted of holidaying I arranged to spend several weeks every summer back among the home folk.

These summer visits, the captain declares, shaped his future career as a big league manager.

"My first world series experience," said the captain, "was in 1906. That's when the Pirates beat Higbie Jennings."

"Taff and I had won a little on the old sentiment, but when the captain was asked, 'What was it?' the captain was

"I had no choice in the matter," the captain answered yesterday to a question as to how he became interested in baseball again. "I had to leave baseball, and never had time to go back in again. I had to break out in some virulent form, but how I came to associate myself with Col. Jacob Ruppert in a major league franchise is another story."

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